

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 L-01

PRS-01 INR-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 /040 W

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R 131100Z NOV 75

FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

SECSTATE WASHDC 4378

S E C R E T MILAN 2127

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 DECLAS 11/13/85

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PINR, IT

SUBJECT: PIRELLI AND POLITICAL SCENE:

1. I CALLED ON PIRELLI TO FOLLOW UP ON OUR LAST MEETING (MILAN 1722) WHEN WE DISCUSSED HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE NEW LEFT WING DAILY LA REPUBBLICA (SEE MILAN 1713). AT THE TIME I HAD LAMENTED THE ANTI-US, ANTI-DC LINE TAKEN BY MONDADORI'S PANORAMA AND URGED THAT PIRELLI USE HIS INFLUENCE WITH THE DIRECTOR OF LA REPUBBLICA TO TAKE IT EASIER ON THE US AND ITALY'S ATLANTIC RELATIONS.

2. I SAID THAT I FEARED THAT THE UNRELENTING ATTACKS UPON THE DC'S FAULTS AND SHORTCOMING DID NOT DO MUCH TO PROVIDE A DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE BUT A GREAT DEAL TO HAND ITALY OVER TO THE COMMUNISTS. IN THE SEARCH FOR A PERFECT PARTY AND PERFECT LEADERSHIP, THE INTELLECTUAL LEFT WAS DESTROYING THE ONLY PRACTICAL DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE COMMUNISTS. MOREOVER, IT WAS HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE WEALTHY ITALIAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY FINANCED THE CORRIERE DELLA SERA, IL GIORNO AND THE WEEKLY NEWS MAGAZINES WHICH MADE DESTRUCTION OF THE DC ONE OF THEIR LEADING THEMES.

3. PIRELLI AGREED THAT TODAY THERE WAS NO ALTERNATIVE TO THE DC. IT WAS NOT THAT HE LIKED IT OR THAT HE COULD JUSTIFY ITS ABUSES. BUT HE HAD TO ADMIT THAT IT WAS THE ONLY FORCE CAPABLE OF OPPOSING THE
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COMMUNISTS. THE SOCIALISTS WERE HOPELESS* HE USED TO MAINTAIN CONTACT

WITH THEM IN ROME. BUT TODAY THAT WAS NO LONGER WORTHWHILE. HE DID NOT KNOW WHOM TO TRUST NOR WHO SPOKE FOR THE PARTY. AND THE SITUATION WAS GETTING WORSE.

4. IT WAS RIGHT THAT MORE ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE GOOD WORKS OF THE DC. BUT IT WAS UNREASONABLE TO SUGGEST THAT THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THE DC SHOULD NOT CONTINUE TO BE CRITICIZED. THERE WAS CERTAINLY A PROBLEM OF DC LEADERS. HE HAD READ SECRETARY KISSINGER'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE AND KNEW OF ANDREOTTI'S VIST. HE WELCOMED THE SECRETARY'S STATEMENT BUT HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ANDREO

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TTI. DID HIS PRESENCE IMPLY OUR LAYING ON OF THE HANDS FOR ANDREOTTI AS OUR CHOSEN INSTRUMENT?

5. I ASSURED PIRELLI THAT WE FAVORED A RENEWAL OF THE DC LEADERSHIP AND THAT WE HAD NO INTENTION OF SUGGESTING THAT ONE LEADER WAS OUR MAN.

6. PIRELLI HOPED THAT WAS THE CASE. AS FOR THE PRESS, HE DID NOT SEE THAT CONFINDUSTRIA, OF WHICH HE IS A VICE PRESIDENT, COULD TELL IT WHAT TO DO. NOR COULD CONFINDUSTRIA USURP THE ROLE OF A POLITICAL PARTY. IT COULD OFFER IDEAS. IT COULD NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF THE TRADE UNIONS AND BECOME A POLITICAL FORCE.

7. AS FOR THE CORRIERE, HE REGULARLY SAW EDITOR PIERO OTTONE. THEY OFTEN TALKED. OTTONE INSISTED THAT THE CORRIERE WAS ADJUSTING ITS LINE AND CRITICIZING THE COMMUNIST PARTY WHILE LIMITING ITS CRITICIZ- CRITICISM OF THE DC TO SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS. IN PIRELLI'S VIEW, THE CORRIERE WAS NOW ABOUT ON COURSE. HE AGREED, HOWEVER, THAT THE ECONOMIC SECTION CONTINUED TO BE DREADFUL.

8. IL GIORNO WOULD PROBABLY BE CHANGING ORIENTATION. ENI SUBSIDIZED IT AND THE NEW PRESIDENT OF ENI, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT SETTE WOULD NOT BE LIKELY TO LET IT CONTINUE ITS PRESENT LINE.

9. THE WEEKLIES WERE ANOTHER MATTER. PANORAMA AND ESPRESSO WERE IN THE BLACK AND VERY INDEPENDENT MINDED.

10. I TOLD PIRELLI THAT IT WAS PRECISILY HIS AUTHORITY AS A NATIONAL LEADER THAT COULD HELP. IT WAS NOT A MATTER OF MONEY OR ADVERTISING

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BUT OF HIS PERSONALLY SPEAKING TO THE DECISION MAKERS AS HE HAD BEEN TALKING WITH OTTONE TO CONVINCE THEM OF THE NEED TO TAKE A MORE REALISTIC ATTITUDE TOWARD THE KEY ISSUES. IT WAS NOT AN ACADEMIC MATTER BUT A PRACTICAL ONE OF THE SURVIVAL OF ITALIAN DEMOCRACY AND OF THE WHOLE CONFIGURATION OF THE WESTERN WORLD.

11. PIRELLI NODDED AND REPLIED THAT HE GOT THE MESSAGE - WITH WHICH HE COULDN'T DISAGREE.FINA

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MILAN02127
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1 19851113
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750397-0213
From: MILAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751146/aaaabpew.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 JUN 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 JUN 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PIRELLI AND POLITICAL SCENE
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PINR, IT, (PIRELLI, LEOPOLDO)
To: ROME STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006